

BEST PRACTICES FOR WATER QUALITY TRADING

JOINT REGIONAL AGREEMENT

Discussion Guide, May 28th, 2013

Discussion Guides are intended to provide definitions, context, analysis, and options for addressing various components of water quality trading programs (e.g. trading ratios, BMP quality standards) that will be addressed through interagency discussions and workshops.

Draft Components of BMP Quality Standards and Crediting Procedures

The following table is a draft list of the information that would need to be developed and submitted with a proposed BMP. This includes basic information about the practice, quality standards, and procedures for credit issuance. If there are any criteria that are missing from this list, please provide suggestions.

Category		Components	Notes
Basic Information		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title and description of practice Load sources addressed by BMP 	
Contract Duration and Credit Disbursement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumulative, annual, or seasonal practice Useful life; effectiveness of practice over time Factors affecting temporal performance of the practice, including lag time between establishment and full functioning 	
BMP Quality Standards	Suitability/ Specific BMP Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligible land-uses and practices Locations in watershed where BMP is applicable Potential interactions with other practices, e.g. riparian restoration with stream fencing increases combined effectiveness Identification of ancillary benefits or unintended consequences, e.g. increased/reduced air emissions Description of conditions where the BMP will not work (i.e. large storms) Any negative results, e.g. relocated pollutants, negative pollutant reduction data 	
	Design criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation instructions/guidance, e.g. installation according to manufacturer standards and/or NRCS standards. 	For installation and management instructions, reviewers should consider the

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verifiable criteria for installation, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Quantitative criteria, e.g. 2600 stems/acre planting density, 100 ft minimum buffer width, 30% residual residue, 2 hour inflow water capacity, 100 ft. from surface water ○ Qualitative criteria for installation, e.g. watering hole outside riparian zone, fence/pipe material type • Management instructions/guidance, e.g. seeding rate, tillage plan, crop list, water application rates and method, fertilizer application rates and methods 	trade-off between using manufacturer's instructions, which will be product-specific but may vary in quality, and NRCS-based or other procedures which will be consistent for the whole program.
	Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation and maintenance requirements and how neglect alters performance • Description of how the practice will be tracked and reported, e.g. noting signs of erosion, measurement of vegetative cover, monitored irrigation systems. 	
	Performance standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verifiable criteria for performance, e.g. no rills or gullies wider than 6", stem density of 1600 stems per acre or greater, no more than 20% cover invasive species, at least 10 inches crop stubble height 	
Credit Issuance Procedures	Validation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation that must be submitted to determine eligibility during a project screening/validation • Procedures for reviewing consistency with eligibility criteria 	
	Credit Calculation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit of measure • Modeling approach and/or tool <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Technical documentation of modeling approach/tool, including model assumptions and estimates of uncertainty ○ Procedures/user guidance for consistent application of the model/tool • Alternative modeling approach and/or tool • Effectiveness estimate, including justifications/references 	
	Verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for documenting pre- and post-implementation circumstances, e.g. farm records for 3 years prior, photo points documenting baseline condition, site visit after installation • Procedures for reviewing consistency of pre- and post-implementation conditions with quality standards, e.g. no more than 15% discrepancy between reported and verified values 	